

*February 27, 2006*

**250 TENNESSEE PUBLIC LIBRARIES  
OFFER FREE DIGITAL DOWNLOADS**

*State project enables big technology for even the smallest libraries*

**Nashville, TN.** There's strength in numbers. This is a proverb proved true in the State of Tennessee today, as more than 250 public libraries unite to deliver digital audio book and eBook downloads. Patrons of participating libraries can visit <http://reads.lib.overdrive.com>, a new site that allows them to checkout and download audio books and PDF eBooks with their library cards. The technology was provided by OverDrive, Inc, based in Cleveland, OH.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to offer legal, free, digital downloads to many people in the state of Tennessee," says **Marion Bryant**, Director of the **Blue Grass Regional Library Center in Columbia, TN.** **Ms. Bryant's** is one of twelve regional library systems that cooperated to make the project possible. "It gives our patrons the flexibility to read or listen to what they want, anytime, anywhere." Digital books are compatible with many desktops, laptops, tablet PCs, WMA/MP3 players, Pocket PCs, and certain Smartphones. Many audio book titles may also be burned to CD and used in car stereos and regular CD players.

To check out materials, cardholders browse the collection, select a title, and then enter a valid library card number to download the digital book. If a title is not immediately available, users can place a hold and will receive an email notification when it's ready for checkout. After 14 days the digital books are automatically returned to the system and made available to others. Many titles are "always available," meaning they feature unlimited, concurrent use. No trip to the library is required, and there are no late fees.

"This digital collection supplements the holdings of many of our smallest libraries, and complements the books and CDs of our larger libraries," said **Ms. Bryant**. The digital collection includes hundreds of popular fiction titles from authors like Nora Roberts, Lemony Snicket, James Patterson, and Susan Elizabeth Phillips, with titles in business, self-improvement, history, travel, and other non-fiction genres. eBooks in the familiar Adobe® PDF format, as well as digital audio books in the Windows® Media format, are both available for download.

"With computers and Internet access more accessible than ever, we were eager to provide digital book downloads. There was incredible patron demand for the service," said Ms. Bryant, noting that the project received strong support from the Tennessee State Library & Archives and the Secretary of State's office. She adds, "With cooperation at every level, and technology by OverDrive, even the smallest of our libraries can tell their patrons, 'Yes, we do downloads, too.'"

Funds for READS are provided by the State of Tennessee and by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities.

For more information contact:

**Local Library Director**

**Library Name**

**Library Address**

**Library Phone**

**Regional Library Director**

**Regional Library Name**

**Regional Address**

**Regional Phone**

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